DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 164 TM 860 225

AUTHOR Griffin, William H.; Barry, G. Michael
TITLE Examination Development for Candidates in Educational Administration.
PUB DATE Apr 86
NOTE 18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (70th, San Francisco, CA, April 16-20, 1986).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Education; *Administrator Evaluation; Administrator Qualifications; *Administrators; Administrator Selection; *Educational Administration; Field Tests; *Management Development; Minimum Competencies; Pilot Projects; Postsecondary Education; Public Schools; School Administration; Teacher Education; *Test Items; Test Reliability; Test Validity
IDENTIFIERS Florida; *Florida Council on Educational Management

ABSTRACT

The Florida Council on Educational Management (FCEM), a 17-member council appointed by the Governor, Senate, and House of Representatives, is central to the present control of public school management in Florida. The duties of the FCEM are to identify: (1) relevant management competencies of school managers; (2) standards and procedures for evaluating manager performance; (3) training needed for developing competent school managers; (4) manager screening and selection criteria; (5) procedures for school manager certification; and (6) procedures for compensation of school managers. Following a synthesis of FCEM commissioned studies, a summary report proposed a list of 19 competencies as descriptive of "high performing" educational managers. The FCEM next developed a five-component Managerial Effectiveness Plan. Objective and performance oriented selection procedures of educational managers were pilot tested in several districts. A three-tier certification pilot included: educational leadership certification for all managers; school principal certification for school leaders; and professional school principal certification for experienced school leaders. A certification examination, pilot tested using graduate education students, formed the beginning data set for item and test analyses. The final form of the certification test was forwarded to the State for a two-year field test. (PN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED268164

Examination Development for Candidates in Educational Administration

William H. Griffin

G. Michael Barry

Educational Research and Development Center

The University of West Florida

Pensacola, Florida

American Educational Research Association

San Francisco, California

April 1986

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

G. M. Barry

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Running head: EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT

TM 860 225

Examination Development for Candidates in Educational Administration

The proliferation of commission reports in the early 80's on the problems of American schools created shockwaves throughout the educational system of this nation. Shockwaves that may take decades to subside.

Few states reacted as rapidly or comprehensively to these concerns, or instituted programs with more far reaching consequences, than did Florida. Since the 1976 Florida Education Accountability Act, which resulted in the development of the current state student competency testing program, the Florida Legislature has shown a remarkable eagerness to institute educational change and to impose statewide controls over all aspects of the system.

The passage by the Florida Legislature of the 1980 Section 231.087, Florida Statutes, was one of the more far reaching consequences of the movement to reshape Florida education. The intent of this section reads in part:

> Efficient and effective management of schools to meet the needs of students in today's society requires a unique blend of skills, experience, and academic background which is rarely provided through typical baccalaureate or graduate programs in education. The purpose of this section is to provide for the identification of those competencies basic to effective management of schools and to provide for the development of a program of

competency-based certification for school managers.... (The Florida Council on Educational Management, 1984, p. 21)

The key feature of this act was the establishment of the Florida Council on Educational Management (FCEM). This 17 member council, appointed by the Governor, Senate, and House of Representatives, is central to the present control of public school management in Florida. In general, the duties of the FCEM are to identify relevant management competencies of school managers; standards and procedures for evaluating manager performance; training needed for developing competent school managers; manager screening and selection criteria; procedures for school manager certification; and procedures for compensation of school managers. In addition, the Act created the Florida Academy of School Leaders (FASL) as an instrument of the FCEM to provide inservice training for school managers.

Florida High Performing Principal Competencies

To identify relevant management competencies, FCEM commissioned two studies to investigate those principals, identified by school student assessment score results and superintendent assessments, as being "high performers." Additionally, independent studies of competencies exhibited by nonschool managers and a National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) study of Florida Schools were reviewed. A ranking and evaluation of these four reports (Croghan, Lake & Schroder, 1983) found the following strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths.

1. Findings were fairly consistent across reports.

2. Each report attempted to identify competencies exhibited in real-world contexts and not in isolation.

3. Each attempted to maintain a performance orientation, as opposed to a knowledge or theoretical base.

Weaknesses.

1. Standardized test scores of students and supervisory opinions were a major factor in the selection of "high performing" managers.

2. The studies were marked by selection and geographical limitations (nonrandomness).

3. The manager was studied as a single effect, leaving out the impact of task, situation, and environment.

One of the studies commissioned by FCEM (Martinko & Gardner, undated) presented several implications of studying relevant behaviors of any group of managers defined as high performers. Namely, that competencies vary with locality and grade level; environmental factors and cognitive and behavioral dimensions should be considered; and a competency "list" approach may not be desirable. The Martinko Study was the only one which raised serious concerns about the basic premise underlying such a checklist of "desirable" behaviors.

After synthesizing the four studies, a summary report proposed a list of 19 competencies as descriptive of "high performing"

educational managers (Croghan et al., 1983). This list was subsequently adopted by the FCEM and has become a part of legislation and training, selection, and evaluation procedures in the State (Florida Administrative Weekly, 1985).

Competencies of high-performing educational managers. The following competencies were identified as being descriptive of high-performing principals:

Purpose and Direction:	Proactive orientation
	Decisiveness
	Commitment to school mission
Cognitive Skills:	Interpersonal search
	Information search
	Concept formation
	Conceptual flexibility
Consensus Management:	Managing interaction
	Persuasiveness
	Concern for image
	Tactical adaptability
Quality Enhancement:	Achievement motivation
	Management control
	Developmental orientation
Organization:	Organizational ability
	Delegation

Communication: Self-presentation

Written communication

Organizational sensitivity

Each of these competencies is described in behavior teras or perforaance standards, rather than cognitive teras. This creates a problea in attempting a direct aeasureaent. To assess such characteristics, aeasureaents aust be aade of saaple behaviors which have been selected to iaply the root competency. The validity of any such selection is subject to the probleas inherent in choosing indicators descriptive of any construct.

Managerial Effectiveness Plan

After defining the characteristics they desired of an educational aanager, the FCEM developed a Managerial Effectiveness Plan, consisting of five components (FCEM, 1984, pp. 17-18).

1. A training prograa to be conducted by the individual districts.

2. A statewide aanageaent prograa conducted by FASL.

3. A university graduate degree training prograa.

4. A perforaance-based certification prograa.

5. A coapensation plan for educational aanagers, based on specific perforaance indicators.

Screening and Selection of Educational Managers

To strengthen selection guidelines for educational aanagers, FCEM obtained the "Targeted Selection" aanagerial interview, screening,

and selection system from a private management consulting firm (Byham, 1981). These selection procedures were performance oriented and relatively objective. Interviews using this system are based on behaviors identified as measuring the competencies of high performing managers. After extensive training of key individuals, this training was instituted on a pilot basis in several districts.

Educational Manager Certification

The FCEM developed a three-tiered certification plan for Florida's educational managers (Florida Adminstrative Weekly, 1985). The elements of this plan include:

Level I: Educational Leadership Certification for all managers;

Level II: School Principal Certification for school leaders; and

Level III: Professional School Principal's Certification for experienced school leaders.

Level I: Educational Leadership Certification. This certificate (FAC Rule 6A-4.082) enables an individual to perform the duties of an intern principal, assistant principal, intern assistant principal, or interim principal. A person holding this certificate may also serve in nonschool educational administration positions. This certificate requires an emphasis in one or more of the following areas: (a) early childhood/primary education; (b) middle school education; (c)

secondary school education; (d) vocational education; (e) exceptional student education; or (f) adult education.

A summary of certification requirements are as follows:

1. Possession of a valid regular teacher's certificate.

2. Three years' successful teaching experience.

3. Successful completion of the Florida Beginning Teacher Program, successful performance of competencies specified in state rules, or having a continuing or professional services contract or tenure as a teacher under a local tenure act.

4. Possession of a master's degree or higher from a "standard" institution.

5. Completion of a core graduate curriculum in eight specified areas of educational leadership.

6. Completion of one of the following: (a) an "approved" preservice program in educational leadership by a standard institution, or (b) a master's degree in educational administration, administration and supervision, or educational leadership from a "standard" institution, or (c) any other master's degree and completion of a modified program in educational leadership offered by a standard institution.

7. A passing score on the educational leadership certification examination.

8. At least six semester hours of graduate credit in research, foundations, curriculum, and instruction in an area of emphasis (as specified above).

The renewal of this certificate requires graduate credit or inservice points in competency-based studies keyed to the 19 FCEM competencies.

Level II: School Principal's Certificate. Only individuals who hold a School Principal's Certificate will be appointed as school principals. This certificate will be administered to persons who meet the following recommended criteria:

1. A valid educational leadership, administration, or administration and supervision certificate.

2. Completion of an approved District Management Internship Program which includes service as a full-time assistant principal, intern principal, or interim principal for a minimum of 10 months. This internship must provide a formal professional development program, including all duties of a principalship, and the intern must be directly supervised by an approved principal.

3. Demonstration of behaviors which depict the 19 FCEM competencies.

4. Recommendation by a superintendent.

Selection of candidates for interns, assistantships, and principalships must be based on the specified competencies and must use the state approved selection system. Renewal will be accomplished by completion of graduate credit and/or inservice points

covering studies based on the FCEM competencies. The renewal plan must be part of the district's master inservice plan. University graduate credit for renewal must be cooperatively planned by the school district and the university.

Level III: Professional School Principal's Certificate. This certificate is a voluntary certificate and the recommended requirements are as follows:

1. A valid School Principal's Certificate.

2. Verification by a superintendent of three year's successful experience as a school principal in the same district subsequent to July 1, 1985.

3. A superior rating for the principal's school on a comprehensive performance evaluation by State Department of Education (DOE) inspectors.

Renewal will require completion of a district professional development program.

Areas of Educational Leadership

By the end of 1983, the FCEM, through the newly established Florida Association of Professors of Educational Administration (FAPEA), awarded a grant to develop a certification examination. The target of this examination was to be those desiring the newly established "Educational Leadership Certificate." This examination would be administered by the DOE to candidates immediately after the completion of their master's studies.

In January, 1984, a steering committee of the FAPEA met to initially plan the examination. It was agreed at this meeting that the examination would cover specific cognitive information and not directly reflect the performance orientation of the FCEM management competencies. Instead, it would provide a measurement of that baseline of knowledge deemed essential to the success of an educational manager.

Eight areas, drawn from the traditional field of educational leadership, were agreed upon (Florida Administrative Weekly, 1985). These were:

Public School Curriculum and Instruction

Organizational Management and Development

Human Resource Management and Development

Leadership Skills

Communications Skills

Technology

Educational Law

Educational Finance

In selecting these areas, the FAPEA went beyond the mandate of the FCEM, as the original request only defined the 19 competencies of an effective principal and specified that a general certification examination be developed. However, this approach was accepted and was passed as State Board of Education Rule 6A-4.082(5), FAC, and

defined the core curriculum for master's studies in educational leadership.

Educational Leadership Examination Development

The University of North Florida was awarded a contract to develop the examination specifications and items. A panel of experts in each of the eight defined skill areas was assembled and asked to delineate the objectives, competencies, and skills to be covered in their respective areas. This panel was composed primarily of educators from each state university, augmented by some district and school-level personnel.

Several deficiencies were immediately identified. Educational research, testing, school image, and supervision were not specifically included. Rather than redefining the areas, the writing teams were instructed to include these topics as they impacted on their respective areas. The degree to which this was accomplished is, at this point, uncertain.

Specifications were then developed for each competency and skill. These specifications consisted of a statement of the competency and skill and its rationale, a description of the format of the item to measure the skill, and a sample test item. The specifications were then distributed among educational consultants across the state for independent review.

When the specifications were agreed upon, the panel was then asked to develop three to seven items for each specification. The

specifications and items were then sent to The University of West Florida for the final development of the test and its administration instructions.

Examination field testing. At The University of West Florida all items were transcribed to computer and screened for consistency of format, proper test item criteria, grammar, syntax, spelling, punctuation, etc.

Next, groups of educational practitioners were assembled to review the items by area. These reviews were conducted at various localities and membership was heavily weighted towards district-level educational managers and school principals. These validation conferences concentrated on item-specification match, item relevancy and accuracy, bias, and importance of content. Where applicable, current state policy, rules, and statutes were considered. Inadequate items were deleted from the pool. If less than two items remained for a specification, new items were written by the reviewers to insure a minimum of two items. Items were then ranked from the best in quality and content to the least desirable.

Test assembly. After the item pool was fully reviewed and satisfactorily assembled, initial forms of the test were created. In the absence of guidelines as to specification or area weights, it was decided to initially include one item per specification. This would create a test which would require about five hours to administer.

The test was assembled into three parts to simplify administration. The first part would cover the four shortest areas. Part two would contain the subjective items from the communications area. This would consist of two written essays. The final part would cover the remaining four areas.

After the test was assembled and administrative guidelines were written, it was pilot tested at several universities using groups of graduate education students. The purpose of pilot testing was to further check individual items for ambiguity and clarity and to check the efficacy of the administrative instructions and procedures. During pilot testing, each participant was asked to fill out a questionnaire, indicating problem areas and questions. They were allowed to write directly on the questions if they encountered difficulties.

Because of the difficulty of obtaining voluntary subjects, each pilot test was limited to a single part of the full examination. This also facilitated maintaining test security.

After the final pilot testing, the items were rearranged, sorted, and the final form of the test was assembled. The final form of the instructions were written and materials were forwarded to the State for a two-year field test. Data obtained from the pilot testing formed the beginning data set for item and test analyses.

Validity. From these extensive item reviews, face validity was assured. In each case, care was taken to insure that each item

appeared to measure the area in which it fell. That the test as a whole appears to measure what it purports to measure--cognitive knowledge of the eight subject areas--is of less importance than other forms of validity.

Content validity--does the test measure the material specified by the state rule--is of more importance than face validity. The process of specification development and extensive and repeated reviews by groups of existing educational managers and scholars assured, to some extent, the content validity of the overall examination. Further verification of content validity was obtained by the questionnaires and analyses of data from the pilot test.

Reliability. Reliability data was obtained during pilot testing and further data will be gathered during the field test period. The following reliability data will be calculated:

1. Internal consistency--This will be calculated for each test form and area and will be used to estimate standard error of measurement and develop norm tables.

2. Equivalence--This will be calculated to determine equivalence of test forms.

3. Item difficulty--RASCH techniques and conventional item analyses will be calculated to determine strength of items in the item pool.

Summary

This shift in complexity of requirements and imposition of control may have the beneficial impact of minimizing the more notorious problems of cronyism and survivalism. It should become increasingly difficult to support a weak individual with the "good old boy" network, or for a person to rise to the top by just surviving. But, an accurate picture of the future results of these more rigorous specifications is not presently clear.

Florida seems to be a front runner in educational reform. The hazard inherent in such a position is the inevitability of taking some wrong turns. This hazard is acceptable, even advantageous, as long as the system has the capability of evaluating its direction of travel and a willingness to make mid-course corrections and cut losses when wrong turns are identified.

References

Byham, W. C. (1981). Targeted selection. Pittsburgh, PA: Development Dimensions International.

Croghan, J. H. , Lake, D. G., & Schroder, H. M. (1983, December). Identification of the competencies of high-performing principals in Florida. Report to the Florida Council on Educational Management, Department of Education, Tallahassee, FL.

Florida Administrative Weekly. (1985, April). 11(15), 1529-1532.

Florida House of Representatives, Committee on Regulatory Reform. (1985). Amendment to Statute 231.087. Florida Statutes.

Martinko, M. J., & Gardner, W. L. (Undated). An executive summary of: The behavior of high performing educational managers: An observational study. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, College of Business, Department of Management.

The Florida Council on Educational Management. (1984). Guidelines: For school districts management training programs. Tallahassee, FL: Florida Department of Education.

The Florida Council on Educational Management. (1985). "Certification rules for educational managers". Unpublished draft.

Wright, B. D., & Stone, M. H. (1979). Best test design. Chicago: Mesa Press.